1807

Gentlemen

The course of lectures you are now assembled to hear will consist of what are called the Institutes of medicine & the practice of physic.

In the Institutes of medicine are included Physiology - Pathology & therapeuticks.

Physiology considers the functions of the body in its healthy state.

Pathology considers the causes & seats of diseases.

Therapeuticks treats of the general principles or indications of cure of diseases.

The Practice of physick applies remedies unfolded by therapeuticks, to particular diseases - to their symptoms, & to the debility which precedes & follows them.

I shall begin with Physiology. I am aware that this important branch of

branch of medical Science is considered as uncertain by some physicians & as useless and delusive by others. The late Dr Wm Hunter has even treated it with contempt in one of his introductory lectures. But surely: ~~the science should not suffer from this cause.~~ ~~For It~~ I maintain its usefulness from ~~What~~ the immense services it has rendered to all the branches of medicine. ~~The~~ Our knowledge of the circulation of the blood, is a part of physiology, and how extensive has been ~~its~~ the application of this discovery to Surgery and the practice of physic! Our knowledge of the uses of

the Lymphatics, - of the functions of the skin - of the influence of the air upon the blood & of the uses of the viscera, are all parts of physiology - and equally important with ~~the~~ our knowledge of the Circulation of the blood in ~~leading~~ teaching us ~~to~~ the Causes & Cure of Diseases. - It is true we are ignorant of the uses of ~~th~~ the different portions of the brain, but this does not militate against the utility of our knowledge of the parts of the body that have been named, any more than our ignorance of the qualities of certain unknown

plants, militates against our knowledge of the efficacy of the poppy, of Jalap, of Rhubarb or of the peruvian Bark.

It is said in order to depreciate Physiology, that Dr Haller who spent his life in physiological inquiries, was no physician & that he was remarkably ~~so an~~ unsuccessful ~~physician~~ in his practice. What proves too much proves nothing at all. The late Dr Chovet of this city was ~~one of the~~ a most minute and correct Anatomist, and yet he was known to be deficient in practical ~~acknowledged by all the physi~~ knowledge in Medicine. His recipes and other prescriptions furnished matter for ridicule wherever they were

men, or mentioned, and yet who will say upon this account that ~~[illegible]~~ a minute & correct knowledge of anatomy ~~is not~~ prevents a ~~[illegible]~~ physician becoming eminent in his profession? I might go on and ~~remark that several~~ mention the names of several eminent Chemists, & Botanists who have been bad physicians - and yet who will dare to say they were made so by their knowledge of Chemistry or Botany? - It is possible Dr Haller was deficient in those qualities of mind or temper, that constitute an acute & sagacious physician, but it is more probable his ~~was~~ want of success in

his practice was occasioned by his permitting his physiological studies so far to abstract his attention from ~~the~~ ~~the practice of physic, and~~ his duties to ~~of~~ his patients so as to prevent his being acquainted with the numerous & minute details that are necessary to constitute a great or successful physician.

Whatever may be the ~~fate~~ issue of my attempts to teach ~~physi~~ physiology, I shall not shrink from the undertaking from all that has been said of its uncertainty, or inutility. Indeed I consider myself as bound to undertake it not only by the duty I owe to the Science of

Simple Anatomy, or the nomenclature of bones, muscles, blood vessels, nerves & viscera, ~~is nothing but the~~ may be compared to the Alphabet. It is by means of physiology that that Alphabet is converted into language. Again Anatomy may be compared to the outlines of ~~a picture~~ Portrait, ~~who~~ perfectly correct in its size and figure, but it is ~~while~~ physiology ~~may~~ which gives that picture its colouring, and its countenance.

From this view of the importance and

medicine, but by the respect I owe to the importance of the Anatomical Chair in this University, for if ~~life be not infused~~ the fires and functions of the parts which will be demonstrated ~~to you~~ in the Anatomical theatre be not explained to you as far as they are capable of being explained, all the knowledge you will acquire there, will ~~be of no help to you~~ profit you but little as physicians. It will resemble the four and twenty letters of the alphabet, lying ~~loose loosely together~~ unconnected upon a table. It is by means of physiology only that they can be ~~connected together into words, sentences and books, or to become~~ converted into language.

Utility of physiology ~~I hope gent: you~~
will ~~[illegible] with~~ apply ~~the~~ closest
~~of attention~~ to this branch ~~of your studies~~.
— ~~I dare not promise you a complete~~
you will see the necessity of connecting it
with the study of anatomy. ~~of~~ Indeed they
should always go hand in hand in
a medical education. ~~They to~~ One
remark more shall close this subject.
~~a~~ that is ~~you~~ ~~the~~ study of physiology
or the Morbid pathology is by far the
most entertaining ~~part~~ branch of medicine.
~~This~~ Often has not only been acknowledged by physi-
cians, ~~and~~ ~~But so also~~ but by the
members of other professions — hence ~~the~~
~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ it has
been appealed to by Divines, as contain
=ing

~~profitable to Students and others~~ —

Upon the subject of Physiology it is common for young Gentlemen to ask what books they shall read. I am sorry to say I cannot recommend any to you that accord with the principles & objects of this course which will be delivered from this Chair & which will be in 8 quarto. Dr Haller's Elementa Physiologiae is an Encyclopedia upon this subject, but it is too extensive to be read in the course of a winter. There is an English Abridgement of it in two Vol: 8vo which may be consulted with advantage — Blumenbach's Physiology & Richerand's is likewise worth your reading. It may be had at Dr Dobson's ~~translated by Caldwell~~ ~~but also Richerand's~~ the Call for ~~a work~~ ~~your reading~~ prefixed. a more minute & for I shall include in it the history of the faculties & operations of the human mind that is to be found in any of the common systems of Physiology.

stronger ~~proof~~ proofs of the existence
- power & wisdom - & goodness of a
Deity than any other part of
the material Creation.

In defending ~~the~~ theory, I have gent: admitted many of them to be erroneous, but in this I have conceded more than was just, for most of the theories that have existed in me=
=dicine, are nothing but a collection of supposed ~~false~~ facts. For Example. Dr Boerhaave's theory of fever ~~consists in~~ is derived from morbific matter, and lentor in the blood. this morbific matter he supposed to be expelled in the Sweats & Sediment in the Urine which take place in the crisis of fevers. ~~and~~ now This is a false fact if I may be allowed the expression. for the matter thus discharged, is nothing but One of the Component parts of the blood, ~~Dis=~~
~~=charged~~ conveyed out of the body in Consequence of the restoration of natural Action ~~to~~ in the capillary Vessels of the Skin, and in the Blood Vessels of the Kidneys. ~~Nor~~ ~~is the lentor the Cause~~ The It is equally false

that a lentor in the blood is the cause of fever, for this lentor is what we now call size, or buff, and which is not the cause but the effect of fever. ~~The~~ ~~Again~~ again: Dr Cullen in his theory of fever places the proximate cause of it ~~fever~~ in a spasm in ~~the~~ extremities of the blood vessels, in every part of the body, especially on the skin. now no such spasm takes place except during the chilly fit of a fever, and it in all those fevers which come on without a chill, there is no spasm ~~in~~ any where. ~~It is~~ one proof ~~proofs~~ Dr Brown's places ~~says~~ the cause of fever in debility - now this is a false fact - Debility is only the predisposition of fever - for ~~and~~ fever consists in a preternatural cases, not in debility, but in morbid ~~from the~~ action in the blood vessels as I hope to prove to you hereafter.

~~Dr Cullen has said, that I hey you would remember~~ I might thus go on & shew that a hundred other ~~theories~~ collections of supposed facts, ~~which have have dignified with~~ upon particular dis=-eases have been called theories, which are not entitled ~~to that epithet~~. I have said a theory is a general principle deduced from a number of related facts that are all true. ~~Thus~~ I say, the passions are partly stimulating & partly sedative in their operation upon the body. This is a theory upon that. If the facts be true, ~~the~~ the theory, or the general inference from them, will be true likewise — if otherwise, — the theory will be false — From this you see there can be no false theory, without false, or supposed facts. Let the indolence ~~the~~ of phy=-sicians who admit facts without sufficient examination, or the wilfulness of physicians

discover the certainty of our Science by predicting this fatal termination. Our inability to cure all diseases is a proof of only the imperfection of medicine, but even this imperfection, ~~of~~ is much less that it is supposed to be as far as it depends upon a physician. For few patients die of curable diseases, in which their deaths may not be traced to ~~late~~ delays in the application for medical aid — bad nurs=ing, or disobedience to medical prescripti=tions. —

In admitting the imperfection of medicine, we place it upon a footing with all other Sciences. ~~The~~ Even the Science of Navigation is still imper=fect, and yet we do not upon ~~that~~ account reject the advantages that we derive from the magnet, the Quadrant & lunar Observa=tions. ~~= of the Ships that are lost at sea~~

who fabricate facts, alone be blamed for all our false theories, ~~[illegible]~~ and if ~~[illegible]~~ those false theories have done mischief in medi-cine, ~~let~~ those physicians only be blamed who have furnished the false foundations for them. It is to be ~~lamented~~ regretted that the ~~the~~ ~~false~~ errors ~~of~~ fluctuation of ~~the~~ theories, erected upon ~~an~~ misproved facts, have led to charges against the Certainty & even usefulness of the Science of medicine. of its usefulness, I shall say nothing at present. Of its ~~Uncertainty~~ the former charge against it, I shall only remark that ~~the~~ its imperfection has been mistaken for its ~~Certain~~ uncertainty. The ~~cases~~ instances in which physicians mistake a disease, or form a wrong judgement of its issue in life, or death, are very few. ~~The~~ In those cases which they are unable to cure, they still

~~perhaps very~~ of the few ships that are lost, only meet with accidents at sea, ~~from the Uncer-tainty of the Science of Navigation~~. Most of them are, like the cases of patients in curable diseases, the result of ignorance, or carelessness. They ~~call in question the per-fection~~ prove the imperfection only - not the Uncertainty of the Science of Navigation.

~~Biot Physiology~~ Pathology

"upon the subjects of ~~physiology~~

and Therapeutics, I know of no

Systematic books that I can recom-

mend to your perusal. They are

all built upon theories which I

~~read~~ which I do believe, and

which are contrary to the principles

upon those subjects which I shall

teach from this Chair.?

Upon the practice of physic

there are many excellent practical

books which I shall mention to

you when I come to that part

of our course. It is one, and but one of the modes of acquiring a knowledge of diseases. There are two other modes of acquiring that knowledge. These are from ~~lect~~ public lectures, and = go to p. =

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